

REMARKS

Claims 23-44 are pending. Applicants elect with traverse Group I (claims 23-28, 33-39 and 44) for examination on the merits. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute nonelected subject matter in a further patent application.

The amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure and, thus, no new matter is added by their entry. The breadth of the claims is not changed because they are amended to correct informalities and to conform to U.S. practice. Thus, the claim amendments clarify and do not limit the claim's original scope.

Notwithstanding the above election, reconsideration of the restriction requirement is requested because examination of all pending claims would not constitute a serious burden. Although the inventions identified by the Examiner are separately patentable, both the need for compact prosecution and the public interest would be served by examination of all claims in a single application. In particular, the claims of both Groups I and II should be examined in the same application. Thus, claims 29-32 and 40-43 should not be withdrawn from consideration.

Further, in accordance with the Commissioner's Notice of March 26, 1996 (1184 OG 86) implementing the Federal Circuit's decisions of *In re Ochiai*, 37 USPQ2d 1127 (1995) and *In re Brouwer*, 37 USPQ2d 1663 (1996), Applicants request rejoinder of nonelected method claims upon an indication that an elected product claim is allowable.

Applicants earnestly solicit an early and favorable examination on the merits. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if additional information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: /Gary R. Tanigawa/
Gary R. Tanigawa
Reg. No. 43,180

901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100